

What is claimed is:

1. A method of identifying electronic files comprising the steps of:
identifying a beginning of content within a file;
generating a tag based on content of the file; and
comparing the tag to other tags in a database of tags to measure similarity between the tag and the other tags.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag uses a Fast Fourier Transform.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag uses a Discrete Cosine Transform.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag uses a shape fit algorithm.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag uses a statistical evaluation of relative value of data bytes within the file.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag uses a hash sum.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag adds time and date stamp to the tag.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag adds a file type identifier to the tag.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag incorporates an error detection and correction scheme into the tag.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag incorporates encryption into the tag.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag generates a level shift insensitive tag.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag generates a time shift insensitive tag.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating the tag generates a time compression insensitive tag.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of identifying the beginning of the content ignores "quiet time" in a beginning of a music file.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of comparing the tag uses a percent

match.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of comparing the tag uses a frequency weight analysis.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of comparing the tag uses a magnitude weight analysis.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of comparing the tag uses a fast track ellipse analysis.

19. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of comparing the tag uses a magnitude weight analysis.

20. A system for identifying electronic files comprising:

means for identifying a beginning of the content within a file;

means for generating a tag based on content of the file; and

means for comparing the tag to other tags in a database of tags to measure similarity between the tag and the other tags.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag uses a Fast Fourier Transform.

22. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag uses a Discrete Cosine Transform.

23. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag uses a shape fit algorithm.

24. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag uses a statistical evaluation of relative value of data bytes within the file.

25. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag uses a hash sum.

26. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag adds time and date stamp to the tag.

27. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag adds a file type identifier to the tag.

28. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag incorporates an error detection and correction scheme into the tag.

29. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag incorporates encryption into the tag.

30. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag generates a level shift insensitive tag.

31. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag generates a time shift insensitive tag.

32. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for generating the tag generates a time compression insensitive tag.

33. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for identifying the beginning of the content ignores "quiet time" in a beginning of a music file.

34. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for comparing the tag uses a percent

match.

35. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for comparing the tag uses a frequency weight analysis.

36. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for comparing the tag uses a magnitude weight analysis.

37. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for comparing the tag uses a fast track ellipse analysis.

38. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for comparing the tag uses a magnitude weight analysis.

39. The system of claim 20, wherein the means for comparing the tag also compares differences between the tag and the other tags.

a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the computer usable medium for causing an application program to execute on a computer system, the computer readable program code means comprising:

computer readable program code means for generating a tag based on content of the file; and

42. A system for identifying electronic files comprising:

means for identifying a file being transmitted through a network;

means for generating a tag based on the file; and

means for comparing the tag to other tags in a database of tags to measure similarity
between the tag and the other tags.

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